

MICHAEL BANTON's most recent book, *Racial and Ethnic Competition*, was published earlier this year.

ALAN BLACKWOOD is the author of *The Performing World of the Singer*, 1981.

PETER BRANSCOMBE is Professor of Austrian Studies at the University of St Andrews.

DAVID BROMWICH teaches in the English Department at Princeton University.

CHAO BROWN is co-author of *The Book of Royal Lists*, 1982.

RICHARD CALVOCORESSI is a Research Assistant at the Tate Gallery. His *Magritte* was published in 1979.

PATRICK CARNEGIE's *Faust as Musician: A Study of Thomas Mann's Novel "Doctor Faustus"* was published in 1973.

RAYMOND CARR is Warden of St Antony's College, Oxford.

JUDITH CHERNAK's novel, *The Daughter*, was published in 1981.

MICHAEL CHURCH is books editor of *The Times Educational Supplement*.

ROGER COOTER's book *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science* is shortly to be published by Cambridge University Press.

DAVID COWABO's most recent publication is a study of Marivaux's novels, *A Night of Serious Drinking*, 1983.

CLAIRE CROSS's books include *Church and People 1450-1600*, 1976.

EAMON DUFFY is a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge.

BRIAN FARRELL is a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

TIMOTHY GARTON ASH's book *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity 1980-1982* will be published in November.

HENRY GIFFORD's books include *Tolstoy*, 1982, in the Oxford Past Master Series.

VICTORIA GLENINNING's biography of Vita Sackville-West will be published later this month.

CHRISTOPHER HAIGH's books include *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire*, 1975.

ROYEN HARRISON is the author of *Beyond Socialist Realism*, 1965.

WILHELMINE HARROO is joint author of the *Shell Guide to Norfolk*, first published in 1957.

PETER HERRLETHWAITE's most recent book is *Introducing John Paul II, the Populist Pope*, 1982.

GEORGEY A. HOSKING is the author of *Beyond Socialist Realism: Fiction since Ivan Denisovich*, 1980.

JONATHAN ISRAEL is Reader in Modern History at University College London.

MERVYN JAMES's books include *A Study of Society, Politics and Mentality in the Durham Region 1500-1640*, 1974.

JAMES JOLL's books include *Intellectuals in Politics*, 1960, and *Gramsci*, 1977.

PETER KEMP's *H. G. Wells and the Culminating Age* was published earlier this year.

R. J. KNECHT's latest book is *Francis I*, 1982.

ADAM MANS-JONES is the author of a collection of stories, *Lantern Lecture*, 1981.

LUCY NORTON's *The Sun King and his Loves* was published earlier this year.

RICHARD OSBORNE is a contributor to *The Dictionary of Composers*, 1977, and *Opera in Record*, 1979.

DAVID PARKER is the author of *La Rochelle and the French Monarchy - Conflict and Order in seventeenth century France*, 1981.

VIOLET POWELL's *The Constant Novel: A Study of Margaret Kennedy* was published earlier this year.

HELGHE RUDINSTEIN is editing *The Oxford Book of Marriage*.

PETER SEGWICK is a lecturer in the Department of Politics at the University of Leeds. His *Psycho-Politics* was published in 1982.

SUSAN SONTAG's books include *Styles of Radical Will*, 1969. She is the editor of *A Barthes Reader*, 1982.

FRANCIS SPALDING's *Vanessa Bell* was just been published.

J. A. A. STOCKWIN is the author of *Japan: Divided Politics in a Cold Economy*, second revised edition, 1982.

IAN VINNARDOFF edited the *Correspondence of the Emperor Alexander III and Nicholas II with Prince Y. I. Meschersky* for the Oxford Slavic Papers, 1962 and 1964.

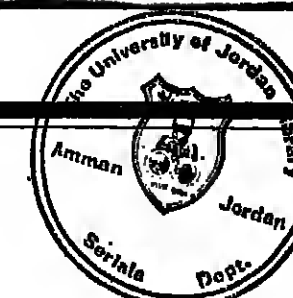
MICHAEL WOOD's *America in the Movies* or *"Santa Maria! I Had a Strange My Mind"* was published in 1975.

LANZER ZIFF is Caroline Donohoe Professor of English at Johns Hopkins University. His *Literary Democracy* was published in 1981.

JOHN ZIMAN's most recent book, *Puzzles, Problems and Enigmas*, 1982.

ZANDVY ZINIK's novel *Russkaya Zemlya* was published earlier this year.

"Among this week's contributors" August 19, 1983, incorrectly stated Charles Nicholl's biography of Thomas Nashe, *A Cup Of News*, had been published earlier this year; in fact the book is due to appear shortly. We apologize for this error.



TLS

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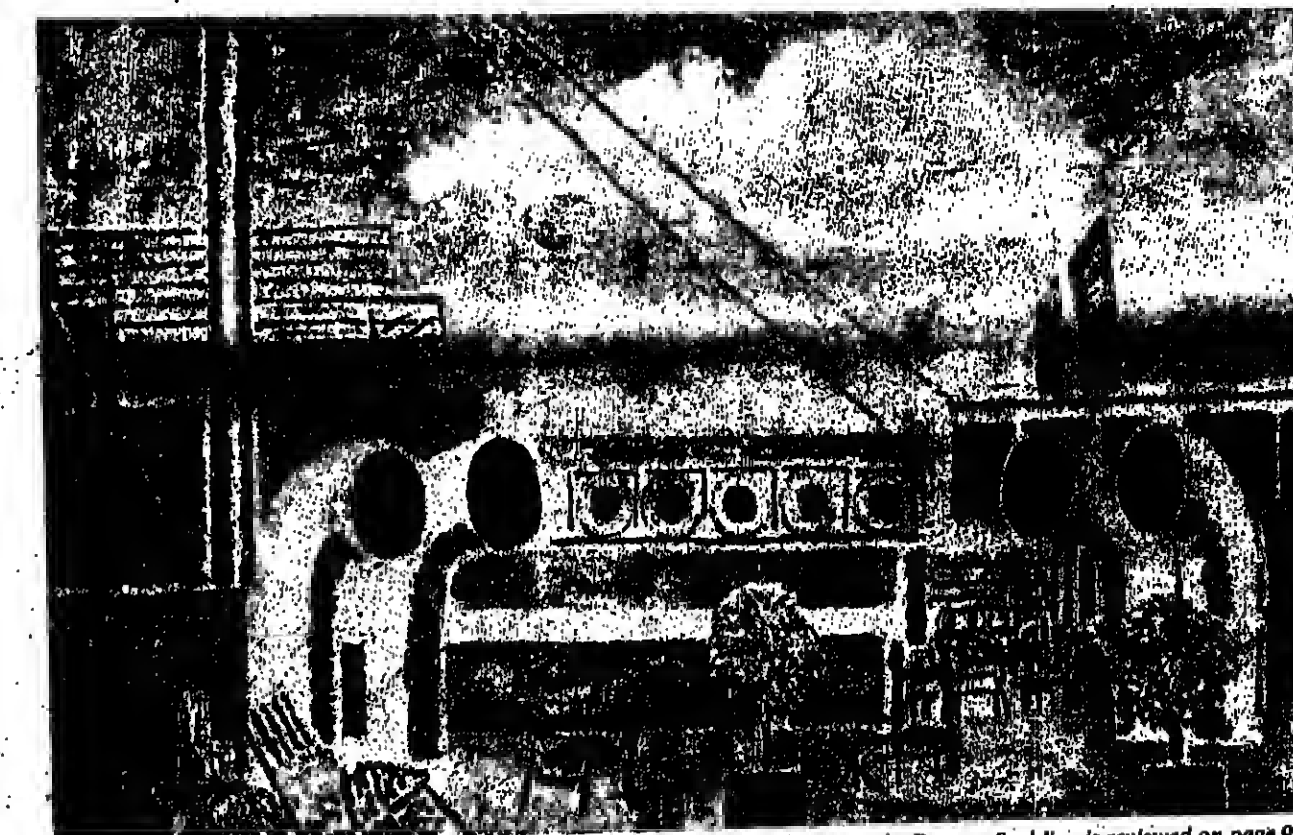
FRIDAY • 16 SEPTEMBER 1983 • No 4,198 • 50p

SOUTHERN AFRICA

James Fitzjames Stephen, the Victorian Hobbes

Eastern economies

John Bayley on Angus Wilson's criticism



Backdrop for the ballet *High Yellow* (1932), designed by Yvonne Bell, whose biography by Frances Spalding is reviewed on page 986.

J. M. Coetzee: from 'Life and Times of Michael K'
White supremacy; Afrikaner capitalism
Angola, Mozambique; South African publishing
Dan Jacobson, Lewis Nkosi, Christopher Hope

G. R. Elton on parliamentary history; letters from Donald Pennington and J. P. Kenyon
Lives: Benjamin Franklin, Vanessa Bell, Colin MacInnes

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 George Cheyne's *The Natural Method of Curing the Diseases of the Body*, London, 1742, £300.
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The dark views of the Gruffian

Stefan Collini

JAMES A. COLAIACO
James Fitzjames Stephen and the
Crisis of Victorian Thought
666pp, Macmillan, £20.
0 333 28731 2

Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf's uncle now? Yet "the Gruffian", as James Fitzjames Stephen was known in his youth, was a large and threatening presence in Victorian intellectual life, a formidably blunt, self-consciously hard-headed reviewer and an unrestrained, overtly aggressive polemicist. Indeed, he is now probably best known for one of the most extended of these critical performances, namely his sustained attack on John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, published as a book under the title *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* in 1873, a work which still appears on the most conscientious reading-lists on nineteenth-century political thought. Among legal historians, his three-volume *History of the Criminal Law of England* remains a living monument, and he has a secure place in any account of the development of the legal system of British India. But for the most part, his legal digests aside, his dozen or so books rest undisturbed on library shelves, and the unwary are prone to confuse him with one of the several other James Stephens who crop up so disconcertingly often in nineteenth-century English history.

This new study, which began life as a Columbia PhD dissertation, describes itself as "an intellectual biography": for a full narrative we are still referred to Leslie Stephen's wonderfully readable *Life* of his brother, a book displaying the dry wit and shrewd perception, combined in this case with a sense of family piety and a command of the relevant intellectual history, which made the younger Stephen the acknowledged master among late-nineteenth-century biographers.

James A. Colaiaco's study is arranged thematically, each chapter summarising and to some extent analysing Stephen's views on separate topics such as "The State", "The Criminal Law", and so on. The discussion is thorough and amply documented, making good use of Stephen's abundant periodical writings. With such an arrestingly quotable subject, no book on Stephen could be entirely dull, but it cannot be said that Professor Colaiaco altogether does justice to the intriguing interplay between Stephen's character and his convictions. He tends, understandably, to exaggerate Stephen's intellectual importance, and claims in his preface that Stephen "deserves to be ranked among the great minds of Victorian England". Without endorsing this guide-book hyperbole, one can unreservedly agree that Stephen was a towering figure in which he stood to some of the most cherished of the Victorian educated class's moral and political beliefs.

An episode which reveals the distinctiveness of Stephen's tone and temper particularly well was his response to the once-celebrated campaign against the so-called "Bulgarian atrocities" in 1876. News that the Turks had massacred large numbers of their Christian subjects produced a vociferous campaign of moral protest in Britain, marked by a particularly righteous tone of earnest humanitarianism, and demands that Disraeli's government "intervene". Richard Shannon's *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, published just twenty years ago, remains the classic study of this sort of episode. Colaiaco writes, rightly if perhaps a little improbably, "Stephen naturally opposed the atrocities, but he was discredited by the way Gladstone could stoop to power merely by appealing to deep popular sentiment." But in fact Stephen, like others of his temper on similar occasions at other times, found the self-righteousness of the protestors more disturbing than the news of the distant atrocities. Consider, for example, his remark in a letter (quoted by Shannon but not by Colaiaco): "To say the truth, I never could bring myself to care two straws whether the Bulgarians, Servians, Montenegrins

and others were barbarously treated or not. . . . As to the 'unspeakable atrocities' one does not expect a savage not to use his scolding knife, and the treatment of people a long way off of whom one knows little does not naturally move one. I rather despise an animal faculty of being so moved." This catches the quintessential Stephen (and will correspondingly seem offensive to those types of people whom he always took satisfaction in offending): the highly self-conscious sense of acknowledging a hard and unpopular truth, the slightly stylized honesty, the deliberate choice of the deflating register of everyday speech, the evident relish with which the unpleasant realities are savoured, and the frank hostility to those who affect more delicate moral sensibilities.

It is a voice with only a limited range, but these characteristics made him a sharp and unusual critic of some of the moral platitudes of his time. He was not willing, for example, to allow Mill or other optimistic social theorists the benefit of support from any easy assumptions about progress.

I think that progress has been mixed, partly good and partly bad. I suspect that in many ways it has been a progress from strength to weakness: that people are more sensitive, less enterprising, less eager to get what they want, and more afraid of pain, both for themselves and others, than they used to be. If this should be so, it appears to me that all other gains, whether in wealth, knowledge, or humanity, afford no equivalent.

This is far from amounting to a Nietzschean subversion of established values, to be sure, but nor is it just Carlyle-and-water, and it was certainly not the normal patter of the Victorian leader-writer.

There were, of course, pretty narrow limits to Stephen's divergence from the moral certainties of his day. The enemy was Kant, not Kant. This comes out in his judgments about literature, a subject which, the specimens quoted here suggest, he could with advantage have left to his brother. He was not the most savage critic of Dickens's "sentimental radicalism", for example, while at the same time concurring in the general outrage at the "immorality" of *Mind and Body*. He found the adulteress's character "one of the most disgusting that we have ever happened to meet with. . . . The notion of duty or responsibility never seems to cross her mind." As befitted a descendant of Clapham Sect Evangelicalism who had only half broken with the family's religious tradition, his own sense of duty was highly developed. He was not a man characteristically beset by moral

doubt, and his recipe for difficult cases often seems to have been little more than a kind of shoulders-back stoicism.

In his prose, even more than in that of most of his contemporaries, the adjectives clustered around "manly" and "courageous" are constantly contrasted with the those in the "effeminate/sentimental" group. To whine about the existence of irremediable pain was "sentimental"; burdens always have to be "shouldered", difficulties "faced up to". Stephen had more than a little of the school-bully-turned-prefect in his make-up, and he seems to have found a deep gratification in the contemplation

of suffering rightfully inflicted as well as of suffering only endured. He tended to make rather a fetish of his tough-mindedness, which was perhaps only a different form of that moral exhibitionism which he so despised in self-righteous reformers. In all these ways, he was an exponent *avant la lettre* of the "no bullshit" bulletpoint.

The translation of this style and temperament into a set of political attitudes that has come to be called "conservative" was a complex matter. Certainly he had no love of tradition for its own sake. Indeed, his sympathies were at least as much Benthamite as Burkean, and this did not merely reflect an intellectual preference for system; he was no uncritical admirer of the French Revolution, "but we infinitely prefer the Rights of Man to the doctrines of de Maistre and Bonald, or even to [Bossuet's] *Politique tirée de l'Ecriture Sainte*". Until he became disgusted with Gladstonian demagoguery, he coiled himself a Liberal, and twice unsuccessfully stood for Parliament as one. He had no doubt, however, that good government was preferable to self-government: he saw no virtue in auctioning off the achievements of civilization to the bidder who could raise the highest number of ignorant votes.

Although the chief tendencies of Stephen's political thought can be discerned in his earliest articles for the *Saturday Review* in the mid-1850s, it

sensibilities that he tended to equate the historical and the incalculable. After his return, he continually hankered after the opportunity to introduce some of the same principles into English law, characteristically proposing to take on the codification of the criminal law as a private venture when it became clear that the project would not receive official backing.

More generally, he took to contrasting the noisy huckstering of party government at home with the quietly efficient administration of India. Such efficiency was, for Stephen, a sign of more desirable qualities still, and it was as the tangible expression of those qualities that the Indian Empire moved him. The extraordinary spectacle of a whole sub-continent being justly and efficiently governed by a handful of unsympathetic foreigners ("I am far from thinking that if they were more sympathetic they would be more efficient") testified to the presence of the virtues Stephen most cherished - "the masterful will, the stout heart, the active brain, the calm nerves, and the strong body". The Indian Empire was a challenge met. The scale of the enterprise gratified his taste for the monumental in human achievement: the heroic was free from any taint of the "sentimental". Moreover, he liked his team to come first in world-historical competitions. The experiment of governing India was a legitimate source of national pride because "if we succeed we shall have performed the greatest feat of strength, skill and courage in the whole history of the world". In a revealingly confessional moment, he recalled that "Delhi made my soul burn within me, and I never heard 'God Save the Queen' or saw the Union Jack flying in the heart of India without feeling tears in my eyes" - "which", he added with that self-consciousness about his characteristic style which sets him apart from so many who respond to the Indian subcontinent, "was a sign of my

Stephen later reflected that "India has been a sort of second university course to me", and it certainly led him further away from the political thought of John Stuart Mill whose *Logic* and, later, *Political Economy* had been his talisman during his formal university education. It was in fact on the voyage home from India in 1872 that he wrote the series of articles attacking Mill which were republished in book form the following year as *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*. Like several other contemporary critics, Stephen had no quarrel with Mill's earlier systematic writings, and even the later works still revealed much common ground: they shared, for example, a similar concern about safeguarding the role of expertise in representative government (Mill's own, very different, experience of helping to govern India played its part here). But his attack, as he explained to his sister, was on those of Mill's books which expressed his "sentimental mood" or, as he put it in *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* itself, "the great defect of Mr Mill's later writings seems to me to be that he has formed too favourable an estimate of human nature".

For Stephen, nicely characterized by Colaiaco as "a Hobbes of the nineteenth century", the selfishness, laziness, and ignorance of the mass of mankind made Mill's optimism about the ideal of self-development for all seem dangerously utopian. At a time when notions of altruism were doing a lot of work in political argument, Stephen was refreshingly unwilling to allow such language to disguise his inescapable conflicts of political life. In the same vein, his response to Rousseau's expressions of love for mankind was "keep your love to yourself and do not dub me or mine with it". He preferred a cooler idiom: "It is not love that one wants from the great mass of mankind, but respect and justice".

Given this basic antipathy to the temper which informs much of Mill's later writing, it is understandable that Stephen should become impatient with some of the finer points of the argument of *On Liberty*. The conclusion of his account of Mill's discussion of whether the prostitute or



Towards the end of a Novel of 1910: A Passionate Outburst

For nearly a full year
thaw were the words I dearly longed to hear!
I love you - when you said them in the conservatory,
with the clashing billiard balls just audible
and later the doornail and optimistic bang
as it were spreading the oars, for from that little statement
grows a great volume of sound,
church choirs, rasps, oars, vows and vows!

I waited so very long
for those few stutlerlog notes to burst [into song].
I love you - from the prominent bosom and the narrow-waisted gown
that constricted your softness, I accepted it,
the sigh from your head on my shoulder,
like a waft of cigar scent on some dark summer terrace
it favoured the warmth of the night,
giving rise to events, a smoke message, important.

I had faith and belief,
like a beleaguered town that daily expects relief!
I love you - I knew I should hear it from the finger-traced lips
and I revolved it in my mind like the
dark brown brandy in the glass
a pleasure to come, a delight to be savoured,
a future anointed in a phrase,
so we could go forward like trains at signals green!

Gavin Ewart

the broil-keeper, or neither, should be prosecuted is a fair specimen of the blunt style: "I do not think the State ought to stand bandying compliments with pimps." The same aggressively knowing manner is evident in his handling of Mill's analysis of whether Pontius Pilate had unwarrantedly interfered with freedom of thought and expression in executing Christ. Stephen looks at the question through the windows of Government House: Pilate's first duty was to maintain order, and to have left Christ at liberty would have been "to run the risk of setting the whole province in a blaze". For the most part, however, the book maintains a rather more impressive level of argument, and it has become the classic source for the claim that it is the proper function of the criminal law to enforce the established moral code of society.

Stephen had no reservations of a libertarian kind about entrusting this task to the law. In his view, the criminal law should properly be regarded as "the organ of the moral indignation of

mankind". Underlying this view was the emotional resonance that amounted almost to reverence. It had just those qualities most lacking in "sentimental" politics: it was impartial, severe, exact, however, which of our institutions, he asked in his most provoking manner, "can have a greater moral significance than those by which men rightfully, deliberately, and in cold blood, kill, enslave, and otherwise torment their fellow-creatures?" For obvious reasons, he liked to emphasize the retributive element in the criminal law, just as he made a point of endorsing the elemental satisfaction the public derived from seeing a criminal severely punished. "Murderers are hung with the approbation of all reasonable men." His dark view of the human passions was summed up succinctly in one of his best-known epigrams: "The criminal law stands to the passion of revenge in much the same relation as marriage to the sexual appetite." As a judge he was noted for his leniency.

It is easy to underestimate Stephen. Some of his articles do sound all too like the Captain of the Fifteenth talking before the Big Match, and that is not a tone we normally think of as being in short supply in Victorian moral reflection. But he was the master of this vocabulary, not its prisoner, and out of it he fashioned a robust philosophy of life which could on occasion provide a very effective challenge to the earnest high-mindedness of some of his morally more fastidious contemporaries. There is some justice in his being remembered above all as Mill's opponent, and not just because he always seemed most comfortable in an adversarial stance. It is also right to let his more famous niece have the last word. Seeing the old unbeliever dutifully escorting his wife to church on Sundays, the younger Stephens were said to have remarked, irreverently but not altogether inaccurately: "He has lost all hopes of Paradise, but he clings to the wider hope of eternal damnation."



A Bible stall at St Giles' Fair, Oxford, in the 1880s, reproduced from A Hundred Years Ago by Colin Ford and Brian Harrison (335pp. Allen Lane/Penguin, £10.0 14 00 6711 6).

Without interference

Jeremy Waldron

A. PHILLIPS GRIFFITHS (Editor)

Of Liberty: Royal Institute of Philosophy Lecture Series, 15
233pp. Cambridge University Press.
£9.95
0 521 27415 X

Two questions dominate the modern debate about liberty, but only one of them was posed by John Stuart Mill. His question is a very familiar one: when is it right or permissible for a society to interfere with the liberty of its individual members? His answer is also familiar: only when the individual's actions threaten harm to other members of the society. The other question is more abstract and more difficult: what is liberty and what are we to regard as an interference with it? This book, which sets out the relationship between individual freedom and the demands and pressures of society, but some of the answers that have been put forward to the second question, more in the tradition of Rousseau than that of Mill or the English philosophers, invite us to consider again and more deeply what freedom and community may have to offer to one another.

Although, as the title indicates, the fourteen lectures published in this volume are stimulated by and indebted to Mill's famous essay *On Liberty*, the majority are concerned with the second question, not the first. And although two or three of the lectures address problems posed by Mill's work, the volume should not be regarded, nor is it intended, as a contribution to the modern debate about the interpretation of *On Liberty*. Of those who do address Millian themes, D. A. Lloyd Thomas is concerned with the conception of liberty which lies behind the idea of "harm to others". In Mill's famous principle; Mario Hellebrand discusses the problems in social choice theory which underlie the apparently unsystematic exceptions to the principle of *laissez faire* in Mill's writings on political economy, and the different images of the economist which emerge from different parts of Mill's work; and Alan Ryan, in masterly fashion, surveys the connections between theories of liberty and systems of property before bringing Mill's conception of liberty to bear on the sort of private-property system recently championed by Robert Nozick. These are three helpful and competent pieces of work.

For the rest, the best pieces are those which avoid Mill altogether. Those others that make use of *On Liberty* betray a disconcerting insensitivity to the subtlety and depth of Mill's arguments. One example will suffice: Mill assessed again and again that he was concerned in his essay more with the threat to individuality posed by social pressure and mass conformity than with political tyranny and legal compulsion. For some reason, this is usually overlooked and so too is the important connection it establishes between *On Liberty* and Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. When it is noticed in these lectures, the point is rudely pushed aside (though Lloyd Thomas is an honourable exception).

D. D. Raphael tells us that "it is really impossible to suggest a principle for limiting the exercise of social pressure" and proposes to treat Mill's argument as though it concerned only the discernible simplicities of positive law; and J. P. Day tells us that Mill's concern about social liberty indicates the extent to which he lacked our sense of experience at how coercive governments can be. It is distressing to see these modern philosophers trying to hammer back the wedge between political and social theory which Mill, like all the great thinkers of the nineteenth century, had striven so mightily to dislodge.

This brings us to the second of the questions I began with. What is freedom and what counts as an attack on it? Day's preoccupation with political coercion represents the negative answer to this question: freedom is a matter of the absence of any external restriction on our behaviour. That simple equation is challenged by some of the more considerable pieces in this volume. Roger Scruton outlines a connection that might be made between freedom

and custom: freedom, he believes, involves the ability to discriminate among one's desires and that in turn may involve the development of a settled sense of one's self that cannot be created afresh in a cultural and institutional vacuum. Kenneth Minogue argues that political freedom involves the exercise in a community of certain skills—most notably, the skill of sustaining a social order that is regarded by citizens in the way that players regard the rules of a game. Since these skills are not easily acquired, we should not regard freedom, any more than we regard patriotism or a living tradition of literature, as the automatic and immediate birthright of every society on earth.

David Cooper's lecture, "The Free Man", is, in my opinion, the best in the book. He takes a view of freedom that has been generally lampooned in the literature—the Stoic or, as he calls it, "Promethean" sense in which a man may be free even though he is in chains—and he explores its connection with those positive theories which identify freedom with a certain sort of virtue,

the virtue of rational self-control. Since Isaiah Berlin wrote "Two Concepts of Liberty", the objections to these theories have become very familiar: they are persuasive redefinitions of "liberty"; they presuppose a disreputable metaphysics of the self; they have totalitarian tendencies; they are an insult to those who have to live in the shadow of tyranny. (These objections crop up also in Antony Flew's piece which attacks a book, *Freedom and Liberation*, written by Benjamin Gibbs. Of that piece I can say little except to wonder, as Gibbs does in his reply, at the intensity of Flew's invective and Peter Gardner's exploration of libertarian qualms about compulsory education; and Jack Lundy argues that nothing but utility counts as a justification for modern paternalism. These are interesting pieces, for they indicate the extent of modern philosophical concern about the application of abstract principles of freedom to concrete social problems. It is in this practical concern, rather than any preoccupation with simple libertarian principles, that the volume acknowledges its debt to John Stuart Mill.

There are four pieces in this volume which I have not mentioned: Hilary Steiner offers a method for assessing quantities of negative freedom; L. Lustgarten makes a plea for liberty on behalf of ethnic communities rather than individuals; Peter Gardner explores libertarian qualms about compulsory education; and Jack Lundy argues that nothing but utility counts as a justification for modern paternalism. These are interesting pieces, for they indicate the extent of modern philosophical concern about the application of abstract principles of freedom to concrete social problems. It is in this practical concern, rather than any preoccupation with simple libertarian principles, that the volume acknowledges its debt to John Stuart Mill.

It is in that moment of frost-harmony that the problem of this book lies. Carroll maintains that Arnold's synthesis of Hellenism and Hebraism overcomes his early distress and resolves the conflict between reason and history; resolves it, that is, in Arnold's own satisfaction. Whether it resolves anything outside Arnold's head, though, is the fundamental critical question. Carroll's work is a precise and fully informed effort to reconstruct what Arnold would have believed the synthetic nature and redeeming importance of his own doctrine to be, but this is an approach quite distinct from "the effort" as Arnold put it, "to see the thing as it is, self-really is".

A facsimile of Dr Louis Loew's 1880 edition of the *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore* with an introduction by Raphael Loew and a new index by Walter Sahaw (640pp. £15). Available from its publisher, the Jewish Historical Society of England, 33 Seymour Place, London W1P 5AP, 33 Seymour Place, Museum, Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0EP. The diaries describe Montefiore's travels to exotic countries, the official spokesman for Anglo-Jewish life, and, to particular, his struggle for international recognition of Jewish rights.

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One problem with this rationalized view of Arnold is that the traditional view of his thought, as fundamentally unsystematic, happens to have been the view, even the best, of Arnold himself. Describing his method in *Culture and Anarchy* as that of a "plain, unsystematic writer", Arnold later went on to condemn the systematic critic as the worst of all possible critics. Not that this slipshod style of culture-critics need always be taken at his word, yet Carroll does not trouble himself to account for these and literally dozens of similar

ECONOMICS

The Western disease in the East

Philip Hanson

MARSHALL J. GOLDMAN
U.S.S.R. in Crisis: The Failure of an Economic System
210pp. Norton. £11.25.
0 393 01715 X

JAN DREWNOWSKI (Editor)
Crisis in the East European Economy: The Spread of the Polish Disease
170pp. Croom Helm. £11.95.
0 099 08261

Social crises are best identified afterwards, by historians. The ability of economists and political scientists to grasp the significance of current changes is limited, and our capacity for reliable prediction of future changes—except in trivial matters—is zero. When Western specialists on the Soviet and East European economies start producing books with the word "crisis" in the title, it is not, therefore, a bad sign to begin by asking what all the fuss is about. It is really so unlikely that the great regimes will muddle through to the end of the century without drastic institutional change? Are Soviet citizens suffering in the 1980s anything approaching the horrors they experienced in the 1930s? Is it obvious that the current disorder of the Eastern economies is more profound than that of the Western economies? Personally, I would answer no to all these questions, and would therefore be saying little except to wonder, as Gibbs does in his reply, at the intensity of Flew's invective and Peter Gardner's exploration of libertarian qualms about compulsory education; and Jack Lundy argues that nothing but utility counts as a justification for modern paternalism. These are interesting pieces, for they indicate the extent of modern philosophical concern about the application of abstract principles of freedom to concrete social problems. It is in this practical concern, rather than any preoccupation with simple libertarian principles, that the volume acknowledges its debt to John Stuart Mill.

It is clear, all the same, that the European members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania) are in a serious economic condition, and it is clear how they will get back to normal, and clearly perceptible in real per capita GNP. The

problems sensibly and shrewdly. Goldman argues that the Soviet economy has in the past few years been in a state akin to a recession and that this state of affairs is, if anything, more likely to deteriorate than to improve. He does not rate the chances of effective economic reform very highly, and his main theme is that the Soviet social system lacks the capacity for piecemeal but substantial institutional change. He wisely does not rule out "muddling through", but on the whole he judges Soviet economic prospects to be poor.

Goldman has not previously subscribed to the view that the Soviet economy was in serious trouble. Nor have the contributors to the Drenowski volume. Indeed several of them have in the past drawn attention to the strength of the Soviet system in generating rapid growth. Now, however, Peter Wiles suggests that real Soviet per capita consumption has recently fallen; Michael Ellman argues that real per capita national income did not grow in 1979-81; Alec Nove, more cautiously, notes that investment may not have been rising. In sum, they take a dimmer view of recent Soviet economic performance than do the analysts at the CIA—a development which few would have predicted three years ago.

The keystone of the Drenowski book is a lengthy chapter by Maria Nuti. It provides one of the clearest and most comprehensive accounts available of the Polish economic crisis (to early 1982). In its recent enfeeblement, Poland is the Britain or Italy of the communist world—only worse. Stanislaw Gomulka's chapter is an assessment of the extent to which the "Polish disease" is systemic and infectious—a question also considered by Wiles and Stephen Barker. Alan Smith provides an informative chapter on Romania.

The authors reviewed here agree that the region's economic ills are largely its own achievement. The Western world's recession has played a part, but not a dominant part. The Soviet Union, which has actually benefited from the big jumps in the relative price of energy, A decline in

the growth of the labour force and the depletion of the more accessible reserves of fuel and minerals account for much of the Soviet slow-down. This in turn has combined with the West's economic turmoil to make life harder for the smaller East European economies. At the same time, as Gomulka puts it, the existing system inhibits "desirable qualitative changes, crucial among which are the technological innovation and political democratisation".

There are only two ways, in Gomulka's view, in which the necessary price and wage changes can be made acceptable to East European populations: an economic decentralization which would diffuse responsibility from the government to "the market"; and a political decentralization which would involve the people in making decisions. He judges the former to be the more likely.

Drenowski argues that political democratisation will suffice. Economic analysis cannot, he contends, account for the deterioration in the region's economy. There has been, he says, a deterioration of "economic tissue" of the level of honesty, effort and acceptance of authority which the economist takes as given when assessing economic performance. This deterioration he attributes to the general suppression of truth, of open discussion, and of equity (in appointments, promotions, bonuses and the like). Other economists, especially Albert Hirschman and Janos Kornai, have said more on these matters than Drenowski allows, but that does not make his argument any less important.

Drenowski's thesis is probably untestable and quite possibly right. Several of Goldman's anecdotes pick up the note of cynicism and apathy that now seems to characterize Soviet society. The country in the Soviet bloc where that note is less audible is Hungary, and Hungary is remarkable for more than its semi-market economic reform: the government has stopped jailing its opponents; and public discussion is not so very far from being free.

Important determinant of the inflation rate in any economy; economists differ chiefly over the extent to which individual economic behaviour is influenced by an awareness of such truisms. The first few chapters of this book are an exemplary demonstration of the surprising power of the results that can be generated solely by rigorous attention to accounting identities coupled with a few "behavioural" assumptions. These assumptions take the form of relationships between certain flows (like the ratio of spending on goods and services in any year) and the stocks (of money, for instance) that individuals or firms desire to hold to make such flows possible. While these relationships need not be absolutely invariant, Godley and Cripps claim that the ones they pinpoint "do, as a matter of fact, exhibit a fair degree of stability".

As the model develops, matters inevitably become complicated. The book resorts to a large number of tables, diagrams and worked examples, most of which are apposite and effective—though by the end they are coming rather like a surgeon's list of a couple of loose arteries to sew up while they get on with the rest. But the power of the method is undoubted. How reasonable, though, are the model's behavioural claims?

The question of the stability of the demand for money and inventories is by now well-trodden ground; the authors defend their assumptions as necessary simplifications, and reasonably so—but it is worth remarking that they are inevitably made at the expense of the model's ability to explain some of the more interesting developments in the British economy in the last few years, such as the destocking of 1980-82. More

importantly, Godley and Cripps make major claims for the amenability of certain key variables to policy manipulation. For instance, the cornerstone of their model is a variable called the "fiscal stance", which is defined as the ratio of government expenditure to the share of government income in national income. It turns out that once this is controlled, the level of national income at which the economy settles down is completely determined, which makes economic management look suspiciously easy. Although the authors are scrupulous in pointing out that the assumption of a stable share of government income in national income may not hold, they do not treat this as an important worry. In fact, although statistics in accordance with their definitions are hard to obtain, the closest approximation I can find shows that the share of government income in national income, defined as general government receipts (excluding those from financial transactions) less current transfers, as a percentage of gross domestic product at market prices—rose dramatically from 24.1 per cent in 1978 to 28.4 per cent in 1982 excluding the effect of transfer payments such as unemployment benefits, and this in spite (or even because) of the election of a government committed to "rolling back the frontiers of the state". On these figures, a government trying to control national income by this method would face margins of error of up to 20 per cent—which makes our current recession look like the mildest blip.

Economists who read this book (and I hope many do) will wish that the authors had defended their assumptions as necessary simplifications, and reasonably so—but it is worth remarking that they are inevitably made at the expense of the model's ability to explain some of the more interesting developments in the British economy in the last few years, such as the destocking of 1980-82. More

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In the general view

Michael Crowder

DAVID LAMB

The Africans: Encounters from the Sudan to the Cape
363pp. Bodley Head, £12.50.
0 370 30968 5

ANTHONY SAMPSON

Drum: An African Adventure - And Afterwards
New edition
224pp. Hodder and Stoughton.
Paperback, £6.95.
0 340 33383 9

After four years as editor of *Drum*, the Johannesburg magazine for Africans that was destined to be avidly read as far afield as Nairobi and Accra, Anthony Sampson concluded in 1955 that the chief lesson he had learnt was "that Africans were as varied and complicated as any other people". After nearly five years in Kenya as Africa correspondent of the *Los Angeles Times*, from 1976 to 1980, David Lamb sadly appears not to have been taught that same lesson. His book *The Africans* is full of the worst kind of generalizations about Africa and Africans, and is peppered with so many platitudes, contemporary and historical inaccuracies, bizarre judgments, half-truths and irrelevant pieces of sensationalism designed to titillate the non-African reader, that the good points he does have to make become obscured. Indeed it would not ordinarily be worth devoting a review to a book of this quality were it not for the fact that it is likely to be given some credence. Lamb, who seems to see himself as a latter-day John Gunther, is backed by two distinguished publishers, Random House in the United States and The Bodley Head in Britain; he has been a Nieman Fellow of Harvard University; and the book has already been praised by the *New York Times Book Review* as "an essential reading for an understanding of modern-day Africa".

Lamb sets out to explain to us "What is Africa and who are the Africans?" He restricts these two concepts to sub-Saharan Africa since he alleges that the "Five Moslem countries to the north shore little politically or economically with the rest of contemporary Africa" - a judgment that sounds hollow in the context of Libya's invasion of Chad and the near break-up of the Organisation of African Unity over the question of the admission of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic to membership. Having thus defined the Africa he is writing about he proceeds to make some strange geographical assertions about it. One of its main problems is defined early on as "the inescapable heat that nubs the mind and drains the vitality", as though on his 300,000 miles of travel through the continent he did not notice its wide variations of temperature and climate. Much later, however, he tells us that "most of sub-Saharan (sic) Africa is blessed with a favourable climate" and could become a multi-billion dollar vacation land for tourists around the world.

His confusion is repeated at the local level: Nigerians will be surprised to learn that in the north of their country there are "deserts" as harsh and God-forsaken as the Sahara. Historically he is equally uncertain, with the Portuguese establishing Fort Jesus at Mombasa in the fourteenth century even before Vasco da Gama first rounded the Cape. He has Arabs controlling the West African Atlantic slave trade, and Britain favouring the topsoil and above the Hausa and Yoruba, to state but a few of his inaccuracies. His ethnography is equally uncertain. The Shona appear to be a major ethnic group in Zambia; the Hausa are in Nigeria and the Ibo in Nigeria.

But it is not the inaccuracies that are the most worrying element in a book which is also one of the worst compiled I have come across in a long time (my favourite is Kenya's not a country). Rather, it is the wild generalizations. Some are downright offensive. Where a European came might kill Africans, as he says, the purpose of the union was to be with a commonwealth and sharing in the

know it in the West. It is solely to produce a bountiful crop of children. Yet later he tells us that the mother of the ridiculous ex-emperor Bokassa committed suicide, so grief-stricken was she at the death of her husband.

Generally Lamb is what one might call a taxi-driver journalist. A remark by an individual in one country and from one walk of life is used as a "flashlight insight" into the continent as a whole. Thus in Kenya he meets Francis Thuo, Chairman of the Nairobi Stock Exchange, who tells him that "Capitalism has been part of the African life since time immemorial", and this absurd statement is passed on to the unsuspecting reader as a verity. Agsir Michael Mstui, a Kenyan headmaster, tells him that heroes "are a Western idea. We don't have heroes and idols in Africa", and this is retailed uncritically to Westerners who may not have heard of Samori Touré, Khsma the Great or the Mahdi. We are told that the people in the Kenyan village of Kural were "like African villagers everywhere a bewildering array of Western clothing" and that "every African coming into the city knows exactly what he wants: a Mercedes Benz". The African woman is "more often than not uneducated, barefoot, stoop-shouldered and beery".

Lamb's political judgments are often questionable. He believes the South African military "could take on a dozen black armies in conventional warfare and still punch through to the northern Sahara in a month or so". Nimeiri (incidentally an Arab) is described as the best kind of African leader; and Guineans are said to have accepted Sekou Touré's priorities - though presumably not the hundreds of thousands who have emigrated since Independence. Perhaps the danger of a

book like this being taken seriously is best underlined in the chapter in which Lamb compares Guinea and Ivory Coast since Independence. He stunts his account on the premise that Guinean in 1958 was the richest of France's colonies in West Africa, while Ivory Coast "everyone thought was destined to join the line of international beggars". Thus Guinea's post-Independence failures and Ivory Coast's success become the more dramatic. But in 1956 Ivory Coast was, in fact, the richest of France's West African territories, with a total external trade five times greater than Guinea's.

Yet for all this David Lamb does ultimately have his heart in the right place. As an American he deprecates the way his country has backed corrupt rulers like Mobutu because they take a pro-Western stance, and shuns U.S. Samora Machel - who is really trying to improve the lot of his people - because of his ties with Russia. He would agree with Anthony Sampson, writing in the epilogue to his new edition of *Drum*, that the Western nations - particularly the United States - still frequently misunderstand the political motivations of black Africans, and equate their nationalism with Communism just because they have sought help from Moscow and Peking.

Mr Sampson's first book, about his experiences as editor of *Drum* magazine, was well worth reprinting. Many of its insights hold true today. It was written in a more optimistic time when the vice of Apartheid had not been squeezed so tight. The toll of that policy has been terrible: Sampson's epilogue is in part an obituary of the brilliant young African colleagues who helped build up *Drum* as an international magazine. Henry

Nxumulo, who exposed the barbaric conditions under which farm-workers laboured at Bethal and Hammonton, as well as the humiliating treatment suffered by black prisoners, was stabbed to death in a Soweto garage. Todd Mathisizulu, journalist and musician who saw jazz "black robes" and gave us the musical *King Kong*, took to drink and died tragically only six days after his arrest. Bob Cassim, a Zulu writer, found life in New York intolerable that he jumped from the top of a skyscraper. Fortunately some have survived: Bloke Modisane, Les Nkisi, Ezekiel Mphahlele (whose decision to return to take up a chair in Witwatersrand dismayed so many of his colleagues), and Arthur Maimane, whom I chanced upon on the train from Victoria Falls to Gaborone when I was rereading *Drum* for this review. "This is that", he said with a laugh. "And it's the only book about *Drum* for which I have any respect." Maimane started the magazine as a cub reporter shortly after Sampson became editor; he had been introduced to him by Fale Trevor Huddleston. In 1968 he had, like so many of his colleagues, chosen exile in Britain, making a successful career for himself in ITN. Now he is travelling home via Gaborone with his English wife and two children. He alone would cross the front line to return to his home in Johannesburg for the first time in twenty-five years.

It is the merit of Anthony Sampson's book that, after a quarter of a century, it can still bring home so poignantly to the reader the tragedy which the racist policies of the South African government have inflicted on so many people, and remind us how much a resilience is needed to survive them.

Set on separation

Kenneth Ingham

JOHN W. CELL

The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South
320pp. Cambridge University Press.
£20.
0 521 24096 4

In this stimulating book John W. Cell has attempted to discover the origins of segregation in two of the world's most pervasively racist societies. This is a topic which is frequently discussed with more vehemence than evidence. If the author had done no more than demonstrate that many of the apparently persuasive solutions were open to doubt, or in need of modification, he would have done a useful service. Much of *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy* is, indeed, taken up with careful criticism of a variety of economic and social interpretations of the origins of segregation. But Cell also suggests his own solution, which combines, modifies and integrates several of those other interpretations.

His first point, that "segregation should be distinguished from the broader idea of 'white supremacy'", is an important one. While suggesting that the white supremacists, most of both the American South and South Africa, provided the essential atmosphere in which segregation could flourish, he maintains that separate development is not merely a continuation of that past. In saying this, he contradicts the opinion of those who have argued that slavery in the American South and the advancing, Calvinist-dominated, white frontier in South Africa merged independently into a policy of racial segregation. At no time, Cell points out, did anyone advocate separate development, until segregation in both regions demanded a radical change in the organization of society. But why did that change take the form of racial segregation? Cell points out that the horizontal division based exclusively upon race rather than some modification of the already existing vertical scheme down which authority was channelled.

As the title of his book suggests, Cell has some degree of sympathy with the white view that segregation is an urban phenomenon which is to be identified with a specific stage of capitalist production. That stage he sees as having been, so far as the American South is concerned, in the latter part of the first and in the earlier years of the second decade of the twentieth century. In both regions the periods he singles out were times of rapid industrial expansion when a white minority was consolidating its political power. But, and here he begins to part company with the Marxists, he cannot accept that segregation was purely a class phenomenon. Nor did economic forces make it inevitable. In a modern, industrial society several other options were available. Many economists have indeed argued that racial segregation could only be an obstacle to industrial growth, or that the development of towns, industry and improved communications would in time make segregation impossible.

Cell's explanation is that when it was adopted in the American South and in South Africa segregation seemed to people of diverse opinions, including some of the black leaders themselves, to be the best solution to the problem of how two widely differing cultures could coexist. It was made possible by the devolution of power to a white minority. In the United States, the illiberal watchful federal government was not willing to let the South sort out its own problems. In the case of South Africa the turning point came with the Act of Union which provided a strong, central government and allowed Britain to withdraw from its responsibilities in the area. In both regions the white minority was now free to establish separate development on a legal basis.

It did so not simply in response to a demand for unlimited cheap labour, though that was a reason why some whites supported segregation. But the problem of coexistence of two different cultures was not limited to regions of rapid urbanization and industrial growth. Cell's own unfinished investigations into British attitudes towards Africa before the war had shown him that it was present in South Africa where industrialization

had made scarcely any impact. That white governing minorities, though convinced of the superiority of their own civilization, were still unsure about how to proceed in their relations with the black majority. Out of this dilemma there had emerged the doctrine of indirect rule which, though it did not involve the physical separation of the races, permitted Africans, as far as possible, to be according to the traditions of their own societies. This solution to some extent met the criticisms of those who feared the adverse effects of requiring Africans to observe rules with which they were wholly unfamiliar.

If this arrangement had proved necessary in Tropical Africa, Cell observes, people concerned with black interests in the more rapidly developing areas of South Africa and the American South were even more aware of the need for such provision to be made. In this way, missionaries and others of a similar outlook could accept the benefits of segregation while recognizing that blacks would have to be content with living standards and education inferior to those enjoyed by whites. Even some of the more educated blacks could regard segregation as providing protection against hostile competition. But as segregation as a temporary arrangement as, in some degree, it has proved to be in America. There the external pressure exerted through the federal government has brought about some modification in the policies of the Southern States. South Africa is not subject to any such effective "external" force. There, a government whose racist views are reinforced by the economic success of segregation is deaf to the belated criticisms of the moderates, both black and white.

It is an ingenious theory. Probably the only way to come closer to providing a satisfactory answer would be to do what John Cell admits he has not done, and that is to consult more extensively whatever archival sources are available. If it were possible to discover with certainty the motives of all those who voted for the legislation which underpins segregation, and then to investigate the origins of the pressures which had influenced them, one might be nearer the truth. It is probably only a little clearer.

A dependency's dependents

Stanley Uys

BARRY MUNSLOW

Mozambique: The Revolution and its Origins
199pp. Longman. £13.95 (paperback).
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MICHAEL WOLFFERS and JANE BERGEROL

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226pp. Zed Press. £14.95 (paperback).
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ARMANDO DE BRAZONCA and MICHAEL WALKERSTEIN (Editors)

The African Liberation Reader: Volume 1
320pp. Zed Press. £14.95 (paperback).
£5.95.
0 86232 067 4

Although Portugal had a huge empire in Africa, it was the poorest of the colonial powers on the continent. Because it was itself on the periphery of Europe, exhibiting, according to Barry Munslow, "many of the features of a typical third world economy, importing manufactured products and exporting raw materials and labour." Portugal's economic dependency on Britain, in fact, transformed it virtually into a neo-colony.

As a result of the weakness of the Portuguese economy, Mozambique's dependency was to take a particular form: "political control was exercised by one sub-metropolitan power, Portugal, while another sub-metropolitan power, South Africa, acted as the main economic control". It was Mozambique alone in this predicament. Other states became entangled in the web of dependency,

"with the South African spider at the centre sucking out the labour and services of its surrounding victims". This dependency has continued into the post-independence era, with uncomfortable consequences for South Africa's neighbours.

In his lucidly written book, Munslow traces the origin of the Portuguese empire in Africa, the nature of Lisbon's policies (including the "myth" of the beneficence of the *assimilado* system), the founding and development of Frelimo as the liberating force, the crippling effect of the war on Portugal, and the post-independence struggle for reconstruction, with economic and military "destabilization" by South Africa looming ever larger. Examining the demoralization caused in Portugal by the ten-year-long guerrilla war, Munslow says that between 1960 and 1968 the Portuguese army more than tripled its size from 60,000 to 200,000 men, war-weariness afflicted both the nation and the serving soldiers, and between 1961 and 1974 (when Mozambique became independent) 110,000 conscripts failed to report for military service. As early as 1968, too, spending on defence had risen to 42.4 per cent of the national budget - with six more years of war still ahead. On April 25, 1974, the Armed Forces Movement seized power in a coup in Portugal and on September 7 power was handed over unconditionally in Mozambique to Frelimo.

Munslow chronicles meticulously not only the military growth but also the political evolution of Frelimo, and his book, read in conjunction with Eduardo Mondlane's *The Struggle for Mozambique* (reissued after being out of print for many years), makes absorbing reading. It sets the scene for what is happening in Mozambique today, although it is skimpy in its discussions of the most recent period, when South Africa has been applying the twin pressures of economic influence and military intervention. Munslow was presumably writing against time but one cannot help feeling that a fuller examination of this interperiod would have rounded off the book nicely.

Whereas Munslow is on academic (he has worked, among other places, at

the Centre of African Studies, Maputo, where a parcel bomb killed Ruth First), Michael Wolffers and Jane Bergerol are journalists, and their style is correspondingly different. They devote the first quarter of *Angola in the Frontline* to describing the South African invasion of Portugal's other colony, Angola, in 1975, and what an informative and vivid chapter it is too. Angola was not trapped in the "web of dependency", and therefore military action against it was the only option. South Africa took this option - backed, say the authors, by Britain, the United States and France. Support for this claim that the West, particularly the Americans, were behind the Angolan invasion, has come of course also from South Africa and from the former CIA agent John Stockwell (*In Search of Enemies*). Years after the invasion, the Rules like Smith claim bitterly that the Americans took fright and pulled the rug out from under them. Wolffers and Bergerol do not wholly buy this version - they credit the Angolan army and its new Cuban allies with military victory - but they do not attempt to minimize the devastation and chaos the South Africans were able to cause as they surged northwards towards the capital, Lusanda. They insist, by the way, that the Soviet Union was "involved neither in the Angolan's decision to turn to Cuba for help, nor in Cuba's decision to send their combatants".

In spite of the difference in style, the structure of the two books is similar: historical background, war of liberation, rifts within black ranks, the South African role, and now the post-independence menace of "destabilization". Regrettably, the Angola book also leaves the reader wishing for more insight into South Africa's grand design in southern Africa. No doubt Wolffers and Bergerol also were writing against time, but they leave one poised on the edge of a large question.

The African Liberation Reader is a compilation of documents of the leading liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. The documents are arranged by topic, each with its own introduction. This volume, the first of three, deals with the "Anatomy of Colonialism".

Riding against the British

Geoffrey Wheatcroft

PETER REITZ

Commando: A Boer Journal of the Boer War
319pp. Faber. Paperback, £3.95.
0 571 18082 5

When the Boer War began in the autumn of 1899 the Orange Free State declared on the side of its sister Dutch Republic of the Transvaal. The former President of the Free State, F. W. Reitz, a lawyer and early Afrikaans poet, was then State Secretary of the Transvaal. Of his seven sons, Daneys

was seventeen when the war broke out. Along with his brother Joubert he enlisted straight away and set off with his rifle, presented in person by President Kruger, and his "strong little Basut" pony. When the war ended in May 1902 he was still in the saddle, on commando in the wilds of the Cape Colony.

F. W. Reitz was one of the signatories of the Peace of Vereeniging that May but refused to take an oath of loyalty to the Crown and went into exile. So, too, did Daneys, and it was as an unrepentant refugee in Madagascor that he wrote *Commando*, surely the best book to come out of the Boer War and one of the most remarkable of all war memoirs. It was recognized as such when first published, in 1929 and is reissued with the original preface by Jan Smuts and a new introduction by Thomas Pakenham.

The quality of *Commando* comes from the author's circumstances and from his gifts. He had the good fortune to be in the world - to see the war in all its stages. He took part in the fiercest battles of that first autumn and winter when the Boers had victory within their grasp: when, instead of wasting their substance in besieging Ladysmith and Mafeking, they could and should have ridden straight for the Cape and for the Natal coast. As it was, the Boers superb mounted infantry and for that matter better gunners than the British, won famous victories but lost impetus. Alive time for reinforcements to arrive, the British were bound to win, despite their military incompetence, by sheer weight of numbers.

Reitz describes the early battles with a youthful innocence which makes the horrors of war appear even more horrible. He describes also, without exaggeration, the weaknesses of the Boers; their quarrelsome rivalries and

the indifferent quality of some of their commanders. The commando of the title was the essential Boer formation, a column of mounted riflemen which was run in an exceptionally democratic way. So democratic was it, in fact, that the Boers, dashing at the charge and in victory, tended to disintegrate when things went wrong: commandos simply broke up and the burghers rode home.

Not so young Reitz. He followed the fighting in his native Free State and the retreat through the eastern Transvaal. Then came the moment when the Boer remnants under General de la Rey took to irregular war. Reitz joined the supreme guerrilla, Smuts's commando, which rode into the Cape and defied the British for a year. In this desperate stage of the war the Boers continued to behave with civility towards the British (if not towards the blacks), although they would execute renegade burghers of the "National Scouts" who served under Kitchener. The British by contrast waged an increasingly brutal war, burning farms, concentrating civilians in "concentration camps" and shooting Boers found in British uniform. This last was especially harsh: the burghers on commando had only taken khaki tunics to replace their own rags, not knowing what this would mean if they were taken prisoner, and Reitz records with bitterness how many of his comrades died before firing squads rather than in battle.

He rode with Smuts to the conference at Vereeniging and finally after his exile and at the prompting of Smuts and his wife, returned to South Africa where he had a distinguished career. But although Reitz himself was under the post-war settlement, the scars left by the war as described in this haunting book are visible in South Africa to this day.

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Exemplar and emissary

Arthur Sheps

RONALD W. CLARK

Benjamin Franklin: A Biography
530pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£18.50.
0 297 78218 5

What is the American, this new man? asked Crèvecoeur in his *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782). For many contemporaries in England and France, and for many Americans today, Benjamin Franklin, the practical philosopher in homespun clothes, was one of the best examples of the new American, although he was not the farmer of Crèvecoeur's imagination. Franklin did much to propagate the idea of himself as the embodiment of New World simplicity, practicality and virtue through the apothegms of *Poor Richard's Almanack*, his dress and demeanour in the salons and courts of Europe and not least through his famous *Autobiography*. In fact, as Clark's biography shows, Franklin was more complex and cosmopolitan than his sedulously cultivated image suggested.

Franklin was born in Boston but he escaped the Harvard education and the New England clerical career which his parents had hoped for. Instead, he was apprenticed to his brother as a printer. Of this craft he always remained a proud and interested member, even installing a press at Passy while he was the American minister to France more than fifty years later. While still in his teens, working on his brother's newspaper, *The New-England Courant*, he produced the "Mrs Dogood" articles, the first example of a life-long stream of satire writings by fictitious authors. Also, characteristically, he quarrelled with his father, his brother, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities and received religious opinion. At seventeen he escaped the confines of the "Mather's School" and, after a brief stay in London, he moved to Philadelphia, the metropolis of the American colonies.

Here, between 1723 and 1757, he established the basis of his American and European reputations. Arriving in Philadelphia with no capital or connections save those which his talents as a printer and writer and his considerable personal appeal afforded him, and an outsider in the complex world of Pennsylvania society and politics, he rapidly made a name and a fortune for himself as a printer (of the colony's currency, among other things) and publisher. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, which he edited, had province-wide influence. And *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which appeared

annually from 1733 until his departure for England twenty-four years later, sold well throughout the colonies and projected onto a national stage his *persona* as the homely, ingenious, frugal, prudent, mocking yet trust-worthy, self-made American colonist. During this time Franklin was also the chief mover in the foundation of the hospital, library and fire company of Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania and the American Philosophical Society.

If Philadelphia really were to become, as Bishop Berkeley predicted, the new Athens, then Franklin was certainly helping its development in that direction. As clerk of the provincial assembly, he was at the hub of the colony's public affairs. He quickly jumped into the turbulent waters of Pennsylvania politics and was often tossed about by its violent cross-currents. But, as befitted a man who boasted that he could have earned his living as a swimming instructor, he kept afloat successfully despite the hostility of the Proprietor's party and the suspicion of the Quakers. He promoted the cause of a provincial militia against the French and Indian threat (and Penn's parsimony and Quaker scruples), organized the colony's munitions and defences during the Seven Years' War and conducted diplomatic missions to the Indians. These activities enhanced his public stature and popularity, earned the enmity of Penn and his officials and provided useful experience for his later work in France thirty years later. As postmaster for all of America he not only did valuable work (and added to his income); he also travelled throughout the country and extended his intercolonial contacts and acquaintance. By the time of the Albany Congress of 1754, at which he pushed for a union of all the colonies, Franklin was a nationally known figure.

He had already become an international one because of his scientific work. Franklin did not distinguish much between practical and theoretical science. His investigations included astronomy, meteorology, oceanography, geology, optics (the "bifocals"), thermal engineering (the "Franklin stove") and domestic hygiene. He wisely attacked cold baths and the notion that colds are caused by cold weather. At no point throughout his life did he miss an opportunity to satisfy his scientific curiosity, report upon some observable phenomenon or suggest a technical improvement. But his most important scientific work, his contribution to our knowledge of the nature of electricity and the identification of lightning with

electricity, were accomplished during the Philadelphia years. *Experiments and Observations on Electricity* was published in London in 1751 and led to the Royal Society's Copley Medal, election to a Fellowship in the Society, and an Oxford DCL. In France in 1752, Dalibard had the experiment of attracting lightning performed at Marly and duly reported the vindication of Franklin's theories to the French court and scientific establishment. Thus his reception into the polite and learned world of England and France was assured, while the growing use of the lightning-rod spread his popular reputation.

From 1757 on, Franklin spent most of his life in Europe. Only eight of his remaining thirty-three years were passed in America. In London he was as at home as in Philadelphia, especially in the company of the Royal Society and the Honest Whig Club. Burke, Hume, Priestley, Shelburne, Pitt and many others enjoyed his company or valued his opinions. In Paris he more deliberately played the role of the simple American, the philosopher from the New World who avoided court dress, and who wore only his own hair. In both cities he charmed educated women, who were to be useful to him. At the same time he showed, despite his protestations to the contrary, almost callous unconcern about his separation from his wife. But for his son, until they quarrelled over American independence, and his grandson (both illegitimate), he exhibited a nepotistic interest throughout his American and European public careers.

As the agent in London of the Pennsylvania, and later Georgia and Massachusetts, assemblies, Franklin was one of the chief spokesmen for the colonial cause in the eventful years leading to American independence. At first, out of touch with colonial opinion, he acquiesced in the Stamp Act. But his attitude quickly changed despite the fear of many Americans that Franklin had become too anglicized to represent the American interest with conviction or fervour. To the very end he hoped and worked for reconciliation, but only on grounds acceptable to the colonies. All the while he was also engaged in promoting his own interest in a vast projected new settlement across the Alleghenies. His drollery of some letters of Thomas Hutchinson, the loyalist governor of Massachusetts, famed revolutionary sentiment in the colonies, but - after the virulent public attack on him by the solicitor-general - ended his effectiveness as a colonial agent.

Angry, embittered and despairing of

the reconciliation for which he still hoped, Franklin returned in 1775 to the country he had last seen ten years earlier. He arrived in time to enter the Continental Congress, join the ill-fated expedition to Canada, and, finally, sign the Declaration of Independence. Within eighteen months he had left America again, this time as one of the American commissioners and then minister to the court of France.

As a young man, Franklin had advocated the appearance of industry and seriousness to ensure the good opinion of the world and worldly success. Now he seemed to cloak his activity in the guise of indolence and frivolity. John Adams, while a fellow commissioner at Paris, complained of Franklin's inattention to work and constant dining out in fashionable society. In fact Franklin's energy in his old age seems to have been enormous. He organized the procurement and dispatch of arms to America, helped and to some degree directed John Paul Jones's naval campaign, negotiated the alliance with France, conducted a campaign of what would now be called disinformation and black propaganda, and led the peace negotiations with Britain at the end of the war. Franklin's skill as a diplomat had to surmount both the French desire to prevent Anglo-American reconciliation or a separate peace, and the British wish to prevent and then to undo the Franco-American alliance.

As always, timely in his return to America, Franklin served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and then held the largely honorific post of president of the executive council of Pennsylvania. But he must have seemed almost a figure from another age to the men who were inheriting the Revolution in Pennsylvania.

All of this, and more, is contained in just over four hundred pages in *Benjamin Franklin: A Biography*, a densely packed but always lucid and readable book. There have been many books about Franklin since his own *Autobiography*, but the continuing publication of his papers in the magnificent Yale edition, which R. W. Clark has mined thoroughly, and the bicentenary of the Treaty of Paris, one of Franklin's greatest accomplishments, make a new general study timely. Franklin was something of a role-player and the great set-pieces to the drama of his life are effectively portrayed here. The discussion of his scientific work is wholly admirable, as we would expect from the biographer of Einstein. Clark skillfully shows how Franklin's intellectual and social contacts were used in both England and France to forward his work as an

American emissary. And the chapters on the complex years of the mission to France are particularly good, even too much attention is paid to the matter of espionage.

Incidentally, there are some weaknesses in a biography of this scope. Clark's interest in Franklin as that of a biographer rather than a historian. Consequently many details of Franklin's life, a minor bit of scientific observation in the middle of affairs of state, small investments and purchases, temporary upsets in domestic arrangements and so on, are presented as and when the evidence in them occurs. This sometimes has the effect of making Franklin seem palpable but it also can irritate and interrupt the analysis of great events. Clark seems to be at his happiest when giving direct quotations from Franklin or his contemporaries, and usually there are four or five of these to a page. This practice shows wide familiarity with the archival sources (published, or microfilmed for the American people) for Franklin's life. It can also leave the impression that direct quotation is being used to replace authorial knowledge of the period. Indeed, many important works on Anglo-American history of the period were included in the bibliography but not in the text. Clark's references to secondary literature, I do not find that a reader would discover from his work how the ferment of Pennsylvania politics fed into the Revolution. Clark does not fully confront or explain Franklin's religious opinions, the enmity which many Americans, even among the Patriot party, felt for him, or the fact, which surprised some contemporaries, that this anglicized American chose the colonial side after 1756. Perhaps because Clark follows his subject to London he seems, like Franklin, to be a little out of touch with the passions and motives of the Americans before 1776. Certainly a biographer's devotion to his subject goes too far when Clark suggests that Anglo-American reconciliation might have been possible had it not been for the affair of the Hutchinson letters and Franklin's subsequent excommunication by the ministry. Also Clark makes, I think, exaggerated claims for Franklin's role in the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

But these lapses do not much diminish the enjoyment to be had from this book. Although there is not a great deal of new information or interpretation for the specialist of English or American history in the age of the American revolution, this is a comprehensive biography which will be enjoyed by the general reader.

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When Melville compares Billy Budd to a "patch of discolored snow" lingering at some upland cave's "black mouth", Rogin comments as follows: "Indians, as Melville says, were before civilization, like snow before sun. Billy meets their fate." Here again, as elsewhere, Rogin's approach speaks well for his own sense of resentment of injustice. As Heimert interpretation, however, his misanthropic assignment of meaning to Melville's narrow rather than expansive horizon of Melville's achievement.

The *Handbook of American Literature* (588pp, Indiana University Press £20.00, 0 253 22708 7) is edited by Richard B. Sewall. The section "Topics of Research" contains contributions on "American Literature", "American Cultural History", "American Settings", "American Experiences", "American Characters", and "American Themes". There are also contributions on "The Interpretation of American Literature", "The History of American Literature", and "The American Literary Tradition".

ARCHITECTURE

Falstaffian Romanesque

Charles Jencks

JEFFREY KARL OCHSNER
H. H. Richardson: Complete Architectural Works
560pp. MIT Press. £35.
0 262 13023 9

The figure of H. H. Richardson looms larger today than at any time since his death in 1888. Possibly this is due to his interesting relation to tradition, both in writing a period, the Romanesque, and then transforming it so thoroughly that a whole period in American architecture became known as Richardsonian Romanesque. He created traditional architecture as a living language to be used in its fullest sense - structurally, "democratically" (as it was said), technically and, of course, visually. He revived classicism by making it do new things. Richardson is one of the most important post-Modernists, those interesting figures who stand on the threshold of Modernism and the last great American architect to be given important public commissions, such as, for example, Frank Lloyd Wright or Louis Kahn never received.

The standard works on Richardson are again available: Marina Griswold Van Rensselaer's *Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works*, published two years after his death and reissued in 1969 by Dover, and Henry-Russell Hitchcock's *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times*, 1936, reissued in 1965 and published by MIT. With the republication of these and the advent of other specialized studies we can form a good idea of this titan, and he was anything if not large: portraits of him, shortly before his untimely death at forty-eight, show him dressed as a biblical man, a Rahabian figure, rather than one used to mortifying the flesh. I can remember professors at Harvard saying that he liked his roots to be the same colour as the richest red Burgundy, and that his architectural tastes were as much inspired by the grapes as by the rough and dignified building.

Yet he was at Harvard not only to study the exclusive Porcellain Club, a great boost to his career, but almost "banned out" for missing religious services fourteen times in one year: not the behaviour for those who are going to dress up later in a monk's habit.

Such personal anecdotes have yet to find their way into the standard biographies, and H. H. Richardson, Complete Architectural Works is a very dry catalogue indeed, unfortunately lacking the colour reproductions which are essential to Richardson's architecture and theory. However, Jeffrey Karl Ochsner juxtaposes contemporary and present photographs and descriptions, so that we can see the difference between original Richardson and later imitations, and he provides a fair number of references to earlier opinions on each building, so the

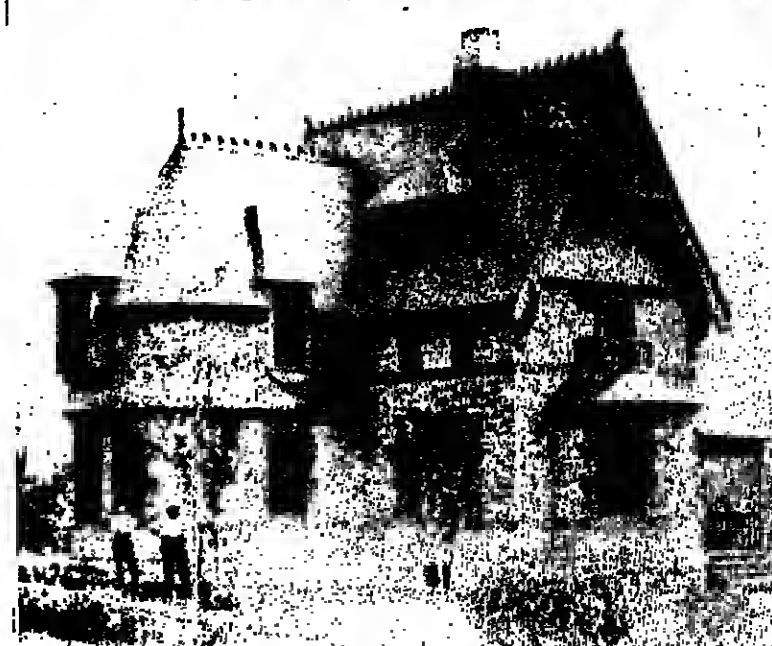
zealous reader can, if he wants, dig up previous views. Ochsner contributes little personal opinion or judgment: his book thus provides a good instrument for someone else to write the definitive study.

That Richardson was a complex, likeable "Falstaff" (as he was called) is clear from other sources. Apparently uncomplicated, good-looking as a youth - before he began to eat and drink too much - sociable and easy-going, he captured clients (so competitors claimed) with the quality of his champagne, rather than that of his architecture. But obviously the architecture is anything but simple.

to the mainstream tradition of the Free Style Classical skyscraper.

His Ames Store, Boston, and Marshall Field Store, Chicago, were key solutions for later architects because they unified open space behind giant Romanesque arches, rhythmical bays of rough-cut stone - the "democratic" expression of new commercial tasks. From these to the Chicago and New York skyscraper it is only a matter of a few storeys and a thinner structure; so Richardson is often credited with being the father of Modernism.

But, if anything, he is the Sire of Post-Modernism. His eclecticism and



The coochman's quarters at Kellogg Terrace, Great Barrington, Mass. c1882: an illustration from *The Architecture of Henry Vaughan* by William Morgan (210pp. MIT Press. £27. 0 262 13187 0).

Rather, it has been described as brooding, heavy to the point of being "drowsy", cavernous, richly eclectic and full of engulfing arches that swallow up motorists. His earliest important commission, the Trinity Church in Boston, 1872-77, mixes of exploration today. It is interesting that straight revivalists such as Richard Morris Hunt should have attacked Richardson's mixing of Romanesque and Renaissance in the New York State Capitol, since such purist sentiments are being voiced also today, attacking, for example, James Stirling.

In the future, I believe, we will find the current eclectic realism more satisfying than the Modernist and revivalist alternatives. Anyway, Richardson's personal and vigorous approach still awaits its complete biography. What effect did Bright's disease and obesity have on his work? Did the periods of protracted rest give him the necessary distance from his large office that a creator needs? What kind of complex and contradictory character does it take to run a large practice, mix both with socialites and artists, and still find time and conviction to develop a personal vision of architecture? If we had the answer to the last question, our environment would be a greater pleasure to inhabit.

commitment to ornament and symbolism are anything but Modern. And his search for a Free Style Classicism - mixing the constants of architecture with personal and local meanings - is one of the main avenues of exploration today. It is interesting that straight revivalists such as Richard Morris Hunt should have attacked Richardson's mixing of Romanesque and Renaissance in the New York State Capitol, since such purist sentiments are being voiced also today, attacking, for example, James Stirling.

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The Taliesin spirit

Andrew Saint

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

Letters to Apprentices
Selected and with commentary by
Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer
211pp. Fresno: California State
University, Fresno.

First-rate architects, notably domestic ones, often make fine correspondents. Perhaps the blend of creativity, compromise and feeling for the customer required by their calling helps to make them so. Among Englishmen, Robert Adam, Philip Webb, Norman Shaw and Edwin Lutyens all wrote splendid letters; among Americans, so did H. H. Richardson. To judge from this collection, Frank Lloyd Wright is not in this company. Possibly the correspondence from Wright's early period, before the telephone had begun to dominate architectural business and before he had put on the mantle of unheeded prophet on the prairie, would reveal a different picture. These letters, written from 1932 onwards, though always strong, sharp and wilful and frequently wise and humorous, are too egotistical and preachy to match the best of his inspired buildings.

Letters to Apprentices has a different value, however. It is among the first publications to penetrate inside the Taliesin Fellowship, the architectural community or "family" which Wright set up fifty-one years ago and which survives today under the aegis of his widow, Olga. The Taliesin Fellowship has had an unfortunate image at least since Wright's death in 1959. It is not an uncommon situation. Because the memory of "Mr Wright", the flame of his ideals and - not least - his archives are jealously guarded still in Taliesin, no one from the outside has been allowed to see the Fellowship. That alone could decide whether the charge of excessive individualism often levelled against Wright is unjustified. Instead, there has been only a private training offered by Taliesin, and what has been the role of the Fellowship since Wright's death.

For the moment we must make do with Wright's own words; and pity, salty and full of insight many of them are. On the death of Raymond, the outstanding American architect of the inter-war years: "Yes, Ray Hood was a good egg. Architecture needs about ten first class funerals of the higher-ups more than it needs his." On ranking works of art: "I feel about 'the best work of art as I do about trees... there is no 'best' as there is no best tree in the forest." And in his most "lecturing" vein, on history: "History is never anything but the outside view - 'Ipsa facta' you know. Hence, unless powerful interpretation (rare indeed), History is bound to be misleading, so I believe... Distrust History more and more... even your own!"

Fellowship resumed its course after 1945 and still continues as a group practice.

Despite all the distractions of management and changes of personnel, Wright was able to harness the Fellowship to his own "second career", the renewed outburst of activity which he began to enjoy in the 1930s. Apprentices, once inured to the Taliesin discipline, were dispatched across the continent to supervise and sometimes virtually to build the clever, low-cost, flat-roofed "Usonian houses" which Wright devised in the years after 1937. The few letters on this subject are revealing. They show Wright taking on not just the American architectural profession, an old and accustomed adversary, but the building industry and materials suppliers as well. These ingenious houses were cheap partly because contractors were avoided wherever possible. The apprentices were even cheaper, indeed they were hardly paid at all. In that sense Wright used the Fellowship to further his own ends. But he was a disingenuously honest about this, never dissembling about who should get the credit, never sparing of himself in labour and often subsidizing the worthier or more indigent students. "I keep nothing for myself and family but a living", he wrote in 1946. "It is all fun. Fun for me and mine and increased capacity to build. That is all." Such were his charisma and repute that students flocked to Taliesin to bind themselves to him. If few of them became famous architects, for many the experience of a genuine, practical apprenticeship after the sham of the architectural schools was reward enough.

Directly or indirectly, the book explains much about the workings of the Taliesin Fellowship. But the letters are too skimpy edited and haphazardly arranged to stand in for a "true" history of the Fellowship. That alone could decide whether the charge of excessive individualism often levelled against Wright is unjustified. Instead, there has been only a private training offered by Taliesin, and what has been the role of the Fellowship since Wright's death.

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Sins of the family

Peter Shaw

MICHAEL PAUL ROGIN

Subversive Genealogy: The Politics and Art of Herman Melville
354pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. £22.95.
0 394 50609 2

Subversive genealogy. In Michael Rogin's sense for what he believes have been Herman Melville's darkest years of his own family in his fiction. Previous scholars have empty outlined the familial allusions in Melville's writings. But Rogin, who is professor of political science, and the author of *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian* (1972) - draws on spot sources of Melville's family history, and on the political and social background of the 1840s at the very heart of his fiction.

Furthermore, Rogin believes that by creating characters and situations which undermined the authority and authority of his relatives, Melville rendered his genealogy into a politically oppositionist device. Specifically, in

Typee he projected himself as a "cannibal" in opposition to his brother Gansvoort's anti-Indian espousal of Manifest Destiny. Against his cousin Guert, Gansvoort's allegiance to patriarchal authority over common seamen, Melville projected himself to *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* as a "slave", thereby identifying with yet another oppressed minority. Indeed, Melville's butchers in Melville's early and middle works are all paid to have "suffered the pains of wilderness" and the wrongs of class.

Finally, Melville's father-in-law, Lemuel Shaw - who was Chief Justice of Massachusetts - is said to appear throughout the fiction. Most notably, *Moby-Dick* is supposed to have been in part a protest against the Judge's decision to return the slave, Thomas Sims, to the South under the Fugitive Slave Law. The sinking of the *Pequod* in *Moby-Dick* is regarded by critics as a portent of possible doom for the said Chief Justice. Thus, it is symbolically represented, as Rogin says, as a specific prophetic of the Civil War. When, that was, Melville supposedly viewed it as a guarantee for American slavery and capitalist exploitation.

Rogin takes his political reading still further. He reads Melville in the context of European Romanticism - as interpreted by Karl Marx - and the

Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" and "The Class Struggles in France: 1848-1850" (two of Rogin's chapters are entitled "Herman Melville's *Eighteenth Brumaire*" and "Class Struggles in America"). According to Marx the revolutions of 1848 turned ugly after underlying class divisions and poverty had been exposed by events. According to Rogin, the exploitation and slavery underlying American society "produced" an "American 1848" - a recognition of contradictions which Melville responded by adopting a satirically revolutionary stance. Afterwards, in the 1850s, Melville suffered a writer's "18th Brumaire" similar to that which suppressed the European revolutionaries. As a result his fiction retreated into formalism. In the end, Melville's evolution into political conservatism "signified the death of his art".

Rogin finds both radical intentions and "familial" connections virtually everywhere. "It is possible because all of the evidence appears to him to support his case. When a familial reference is lacking, for example, he explains that Judge Shaw is present by his absence in *Typee*. When Melville's attitudes seem not to be radical, Rogin explains that he was identifying himself with both with and against his brother. In Rogin's view, however, though the Melville family connections that the

gathered here "fascinating. And whatever interpretation one adopts, it is certainly significant that both of Melville's grandfathers fought with distinction in the American Revolution. As for *White-Jacket* and *Billy Budd*, both of which draw on a real case - the Somers mutiny - it is crucial to recall that in that incident Melville's cousin Guert was one of the ship's officers who condemned the accused seaman to death.

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13 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3JF.

A moon among shooting stars

John Russell

FRANCES SPALDING

Vanessa Bell
399pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£12.95.
0 297 781626

It was widely held in her lifetime that of the founder members of the Bloomsbury group Vanessa Bell was the most distinguished human being. This point of view could take an extreme form, as when her son Julian said that "Jane Austen's really the only woman, except Nessa, whom one can have respect for — I mean of course intellectual respect". But Leonard Woolf was not given to hyperbole, and even he was moved to write that "Vanessa in her thirties had something of that physical splendour which Adonis must have seen when the goddess suddenly stood before him". Nor was it a beauty that faded. She was in her sixtieth year when Virginia Woolf wrote to her and asked "Are you always as beautiful as I thought you the last night at Charleston, when I could hardly breathe for fear of unsettling the magnificent human (Camberwell) beauty who was, I suppose, mending socks?"

Vanessa Bell gave a characteristically understated account of her own physical beauty in the self-portrait that is reproduced on the jacket of Frances Spalding's excellent biography. But she also had a beauty of presence for which no one adjective will suffice. Roger Fry, who loved her and lost her, wrote: "You have done such an extraordinarily difficult thing, without any fuss, but thro' all the conventions kept friends with a pernickety creature like Clive, got quit of me and yet kept me your devoted friend, got all the things you need for your development and yet managed to be a splendid mother."

You give one a sense of security of something solid and real in a smiling woman. This was the woman of whom her sister once said that she had only to come into the room to make "everything seem real, and large, and infinitely composed and profound". She was moreover completely herself. In her late fifties Virginia Woolf wrote of her that "She's taken her own life in London life; refuses to be a famous painter; buys no clothes; sees whom she likes as she likes; and altogether leads an indomitable, sensible and very sublime existence". Son and sister are not always the definitive witnesses; but in the case of Vanessa Bell they said what everyone else thought, but could not have said so well. In a small and densely inter-related society that was full of shooting stars, she had the effect of an unhurrying harvest moon. And it was to the world, in the end, and not to the first-world, that she returned. Kenneth Clark is the 1930s. He looked as if he had never in his life felt hesitation or indecision. But in old age he liked to remember how he had always asked himself "Now what would Vanessa say?" when he was not quite sure what to do.

Given the exceptional quality of the trust that she inspired in so many people, it might seem surprising that no one has written a biography before. We are doubly lucky that no one did. Now that it has been done, it could hardly be bettered. Mrs Spalding has of course drawn the right material, and a million that to say, at which almost every other document can be consulted. She has drawn on the letters of Vanessa Bell, and on the letters of those who knew her. She has also drawn on the almost unimagined but voluminous material that she has collected, and which she has made available to the public. In such cases, the plausible network in which everything is related is "true" and which in the end carries no conviction.

Mrs Spalding has turned to advantage what appeared to her the chief obstacle to a full and truthful life of Vanessa Bell: the fact that she was a private person and wished to remain quiet. Although Vanessa Bell did not care to give anything away about herself she was the object of lifelong affectionate curiosity on the part of everyone who knew her. Letters, diaries, memoirs, conversations passed on via word — all abundant knowledge, how to read, and re-compose these

compounded refractions Spalding has brought Vanessa Bell back to life.

She was born in 1879 and must therefore be counted a late Victorian. More than that, she was a late-Victorian Londoner of a particular kind. Ensnared behind the teapot in her father's house, riding before breakfast along the Ladies' Mile in Rotten Row with a blue enamel butterfly in her hair, sitting speechless through long late-Victorian dinners with a Malmaison carnation pinned on her evening dress, she sized up the world of brains, the world of art and the world of privilege in ways that served her for ever. A Cordelin with an exceptional intelligence, she emerged hardened but intact from her weekly discussions of housekeeping bills with her father, who in that context was a classic late-Victorian ogre. "Those weekly sessions left her", Spalding tells us, "with a deep distaste for emotional scenes; they made her a rigorously careful housekeeper for the rest of her life; and they developed her self-control."

Even at this early stage in the book Spalding is notably fair in her treatment of matters that have turned up in many another place. On the subject of the alleged indecencies which George Duckworth perpetrated upon Virginia Woolf when she was hardly more than a child, she holds a revisionist point of view, believing that Virginia's account of the fondlings in question may have been much exaggerated. She is also the first biographer to give due credit to Clive Bell for the immense amount of spontaneous uncomplicated happiness that he gave to so many people during his long life. Thereafter, we trust her, the events that she sets out have often been presented before, but she serves them with new ingredients that she has found in Cambridge, in Suffolk, in New York, in Texas or in places that remain private.

The Bloomsbury group was, of course, famous for its *franc-parler*, and nowhere more so than in textual matters. Even so, it is conceivable that without the relatively recent deaths of Duncan Grant, David Garnett and Lady Keynes, Spalding's account might not have been so full. It is difficult, though, to re-create the precise tone of voice with which Vanessa Bell herself spoke of those matters. Virginia Woolf writes of telling her, on impulse, in a chemist's shop of her required passion for Vita Sackville-West: "But do you really like going to bed with women?" Nessa said, "And how do you do it?" And so she bought her pills to take abroad, talking as loud as a parrot."

But the main events of Vanessa Bell's life — the first years of her marriage to Clive Bell, her romance with Roger Fry, her long partnership in life and art with Duncan Grant, the death in 1939 of her son Julian, and her idiosyncratic but famously committed career as a mother — Spalding does very well indeed.

Vanessa Bell may have appeared to be "monumental as a Sphinx", as her sister once said, but she was a woman who felt deeply and who felt herself steadfastly. In a society where many people changed their feelings as often as they changed their shirts, Vanessa Bell was not in her nature. Spalding is a good writer, both on the texture of everyday life at Charleston, and on the deeper and more significant matters with which Vanessa Bell dealt. With the matching and matings of all those around her — not least when, as was the case with Duncan Grant, those matings and matings put her own happiness in jeopardy.

There remains the question of her work. Vanessa Bell lived for her art and she was surrounded by people who prized painting as one of the most sacred of human activities. She was a painter, moreover, of having lived through one of the great periods of creative painting in the world. There was a moment just before 1914 when it looked as if she had a distinctive contribution to make to the painting of the world. The history of English art, let alone of art in general, was changed by her presence. With some help from the artist, a new gallery was opened in London, and Vanessa Bell's paintings have been very ably arranged, the illustrations

in this book are persuasive as advocacy. But Vanessa Bell's output, as distinct from her unwearying professionalism, lends support to an idea that is backed up, perhaps involuntarily, by this biography. It is that the Bloomsbury group in general was not very receptive to the great achievements of modernism in painting. They were happy with Jean Munch and André Dunoyer de Segonzac, but there is no sign that they ever came to grips with anything of real stature that occurred after the second Post-Impressionist Exhibition of 1913. As they were in 1913, so they remained, with only minor revisions and adjustments.

Yet there remains the period during the First World War in which Vanessa Bell thinned down her paint, thinned down her imagery and produced the tell-all-but-gaunt reductions that still make an effect of stinging. These are

remarkable paintings, and nothing quite like them came out of England at that time. Nor did anything quite like them come out of Vanessa Bell's studio again. Her genius went into her life, and it was so talent that she continued to work as a painter.

Anyone who doubts this should compare the impact of Vanessa Bell in life, as it is documented in this biography, with the impact of her later paintings. The oils are dogged. Only where the hand could move more lightly does she seem to paint freely, and like herself. (Who can forget the look of her book jackets as they turned up, year by year, in bookshops?) In decorations, large or small, she had a large and generous calligraphy that was unmistakable. But the big oil paintings too often look cangeled, rather than finished, and we wait in vain for them to "make everything seem real, and large, and infinitely composed".

This is therefore the biography of a considerable human being, rather than of a major painter. As a chronicler of human entanglements, and of the years in which they were resolved, and of the year, without recrimination or fuss, will have an enduring fascination. It is shown how very gifted and intelligent people lived during a certain period. Problems that are generally in spirit of reason, good will and eventual harmony. How should we not welcome, and how should not prize, an full and so well-balanced record of those gains-on?

This said, the book has some minor defects. Given that Mrs Spalding has range over a period of eighty years, an appearance of all-seeing intimacy, it is inevitable that a few errors of emphasis should creep in: by no means of the imagination could Mrs Hutchinson have been called "the little artist" nor "a prolific novelist" in the eyes of his contemporaries: he was the author of a very few novels, every one of which bears re-examination. There are more misuses of rank and style than should have been permitted in a book about people who knew all about such things. No member of Bloomsbury would have condoned the use of the hideous adverb "currently", and so far from Dorothy Bussy's being "currently" bound up with André Gide in 1929 she was in love with him, beyond reason or recall, from the day that she met him until the day of her death. In a book in which every quotation leaps out at us from the page by reason of its freshness and spontaneity it is depressing to encounter the occasional cliché that, for example, the relationship between Vanessa Bell and Roger Fry "settled into one as comfortable and familiar as a well-worn glove". And while it is true that "Jack Hutchinson", "Billy Winkworth" and "Jimmy Sheehan" were so spoken of among their friends, the reader should be able to identify them as St John Hutchinson, K.C., W. W. Winkworth, the eminent scholar of oriental art and Vincent Sheehan, in his day a well-known American journalist. But these are spectacles upon a mirror that everywhere else gives us a true reflection. Vanessa Bell adds a new and indispensable dimension to our knowledge of Bloomsbury, and it is very much to be welcomed.



"Clive de Canelegano" "David and Jonathan" (1905-10), reproduced from: Cima de Canelegano by Peter Humphrey (432pp. Cambridge University Press. £60. 0 521 23266 X).

Icons of relaxation

Simon Digby

MARK ZEBROWSKI

Deccan Painting
236pp, with colour and black-and-white illustrations. Sotheby Public Auctions, £27.50.
0 85667 153 3

The characteristic landscape of the Deccan, of which elements recur in these paintings, is a high plateau strewn with stones and variegated by hillsides, far-palms and small lakes. In the Middle Ages and down to modern times the Deccan plateau was an inland island where Persianate culture reached its furthest extension. A number of paintings which must be regarded as masterpieces, among the best of all Indian paintings, are executed within the lands of Islam. These are powerfully evocative icons of individual rulers, of Sufi men of religion and of strange, almost sinister Yoginis (female Yogis) whose trappings of austerity are transformed into objects of luxury.

In this substantial and perceptive account, Dr Zebrowski distinguishes more clearly than has previously been possible, particularly in the cases of Bilapur and Golkonda, between the different courtly styles; and he identifies, with considerable success, the individual handwork of painters at these courts. Painting at Bilapur has an interlarded, meditative quality. It produced most of the great icons, and in those, the most accomplished of the Bilapur painters, the colouring and treatment of the landscape are hallucinatory. By contrast the paintings of Golkonda, often excel in flat decorative patterns, verging on abstraction.

probably Shivaji and his father. When the Deccan sultanates had all gone down before the Mughols, it was Shivaji who cracked the carapace of Mughal power.

Surviving Deccan paintings of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century are much rarer than their Mughal counterparts, probably on account of such incidents as the Mughal siege of Bilapur in 1686. Many of the most important paintings which escaped destruction came into the hands of the Mughal general who took the provincial fortress of Adoni; they remained in the possession of his descendants the Maharajas of Bikaner until the middle of this century.

In this limited corpus there are a number of paintings which must be regarded as masterpieces, among the best of all Indian paintings, are executed within the lands of Islam. These are powerfully evocative icons of individual rulers, of Sufi men of religion and of strange, almost sinister Yoginis (female Yogis) whose trappings of austerity are transformed into objects of luxury.

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Zebrowski raises the question of the extent to which these differing tendencies were the result of the preference and patronage of the two ruling houses, which were equals in refinement of taste. Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1579-1627) was a musical performer and theorist — a famous musician of the emperor Akbar's court. Bijapur was set out on the long and arduous journey from Agra in order to hear him. According to Zebrowski's analysis, he possessed three painted great technical accomplishments (no one probably immigrated), who were prepared to work in a common idiom. Ibrahim's contemporary at Golkonda, Muhammad-Qutb Shah (1585-1612) was the greatest Urdu poet of his age, now represented in a historical anthology of Urdu verse. He had one country-burn painter working with wild, ill-disciplined talent in a degraded Indian idiom and a skill in immigrant painting from Buthkur, who provided them with illustrations to the Sultan's collected poems.

Zebrowski's work is possibly not the last word on Deccan painting, but it is the first comprehensive survey of the field and it tackles courageously and with intelligence a host of complex problems of style and influence. He continues the story of Deccan painting through a survey of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, at the courts of the Nizams of Hyderabad, and of Rajahmundry, and almost uncharted territory of the past. I was delighted to find a "carpet-on" which a petty Rajah seated, of an army of foot-soldiers in the Ashmolean Museum.

Bat, ball and brush

Alan Ross

ROBIN MARLAR and ALASTAIR SMART

The Art of Cricket
250pp. Secker and Warburg. £15.
0 436 47390 9

TREVOR BAILEY, RICHIE BENAVIDES, COLIN COWDREY and JIM LAKER

The Lord's Taverners Fifty Greatest: The Fifty Greatest Post-War Cricketers from around the world
128pp. Heinemann. £12.95.
0 434 58039 0

Cricket and racing have attracted mixed artists, as well as writers, than any other sport, with possibly the notable Art a bad third. It is probably fair to say, though, that whereas an anthology of prose and poetry devoted to cricket would be more rewarding than one devoted to racing — or at least its contributors more distinguished — in painting it would be the other way round. The painters of cricket, unlike those attracted by the thoroughbred sphere, have rarely been eminent in their profession. Robin Simon and Alastair Smart can, it is true, compile a list of names that includes Turner, Wright of Derby, Zoffany, Cotes, Francis Hayman, Ford Madox Brown and Camille Pissarro, but the interest of all these in the game was peripheral, and in any case their works are small beer in relation to their racing equivalents. The cricket pictures that grace most pavilions, from Lord's to the smaller county grounds, are generally unpretentious works by unknown artists. They are no less pleasing for that. In many cases they are copies, as valuable for their geographical interest as for any artistic quality. There have, certainly, been some characteristic portraits of famous players, though in the last sixty years or so the photograph has replaced the painting as a source of sociological or technical detail.

The Art of Cricket makes plain that its concern is largely art-historical, an approach its authors consider unjustly neglected. The book is itself a "companion", as well as a catalogue, to an exhibition of cricket art which began in the Fine Art Society in Bond Street during the summer and is now on a provincial tour. The exhibition, however, contains only a fraction of the works discussed or illustrated in the present volume. The idea for the book was conceived in the Long Room of "The Bridge", when the authors, colleagues in the Art department of the University of Nottingham, were attracted by a painting called "Playing

unt time in an awkward light" by Frank Butson. This picture, originally shown at the Royal Academy in 1901, is beautifully evocative of the last moments of a match, when for the batsman the ball is scarcely detectable from the fanned sky behind. Unfortunately, there are far too few such pictures among those illustrated here. Robin Simon's interests centre on the Italian art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and British art of the eighteenth century. Alastair Smart's books include studies of Allan Ramsay, Constable, Giotto and Rembrandt and Mannerist art. Not surprisingly, their selection of paintings is strongest in its earlier sections, especially eighteenth-century conversation pieces, where iclms of clothing are lovingly painted and the cricketers' relevance is marginal. The authors seem faintly dismissive of painters whose responses are "those of landscape painters to the particular beauty of a particular scene" rather than to, in their own words, "cricket as a contest". It is surely cricket in its landscape setting that is one of the essential attractions outside the first-class game.

The authors make no bones about their concern being principally with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The art of the twentieth century gets short shrift, Lawrence Tynbne, Ruskin Spear, Spencer Gore and Algernon Newton being the only ones in coteh the selectors' eye. This seems a pity, for while there are probably only half-a-dozen painters in the last few decades — Lowry, Gerald Kelly, David Inshaw and Peter Unsworth in particular — who have painted cricket pictures of quality or originality, they are of more interest than those mentioned here.

As a work of scholarship and attribution *The Art of Cricket* is a valuable book. The catalogue notes are admirably informative and the colour illustrations are preceded by fifty-five pages of text, devoted to such subjects as early portraits and players, cricket portraits, MCC, and women's cricket. It would be possible without much difficulty to compile a more engaging and attractive collection of cricket pictures, but Messrs Simon and Smart have their taste, and this finely produced volume serves it faithfully.

The Lord's Taverners Fifty Greatest contains colour portraits and action-studies of those selectors consider the greatest post-war cricketers. It is difficult to quarrel with their list. The paintings are done by a team of four, Mike Francis, Iven Rose, Rodger Towors and Ron Woolton. Their motifs are fairly simple and posterish, but between them they hit and miss the target about an equal number of times. A page of informative text faces each illustration.

Grouse season

P. H. Sutcliffe

E. M. WELLINGS

Yellow Cricketers
172pp. Allen and Unwin. £9.95.
0 04 79606 3

A publisher, "poor inquisitive fish", apparently turned this book down on the grounds that it did not tell us much about the author. The author explains that it was never intended to. Wellings is of interest essentially to himself. He confides one intimate detail of the masculine gender; a fact that, apparently, escaped the attention of the *Evening Standard*. The thirty-six years for which Wellings was a cricket correspondent.

His writing first-class cricketer as a boy in 1915 first played at Oxford University at the end of the 1920s and he had a few seasons with Surrey. He then saw the "legendary" cricketer, who was often called "the old man" and after so long a time in the author's memory the name is bound to be high. He was regarded as a great

man, as well as a great cricketer, and even now his admiration for him seems touched by hero-worship. His admiration for Wilfred Rhodes is touched by bewilderment still, as he recalls a "diabolical" over from the veteran in which he quite failed to pick up the flight of any delivery. In a chapter on "Yorkshire cricket he is proud to say that he was dismissed in turn by Bowes, Rhodes, Leyland, Macaulay and Verity. To those for whom these are still household names the book will give much pleasure.

Wellings shows an engaging distillation to stick to the point; he rambles and ruminates about the famous players of the past, and recollects yet again old debates. Should Fletcher have been captain of England? Was Bradman or Hobbs the greater batsman (the answer is predictable)? How can we account for the ineptitude of the selectors in 1921, or indeed at any other time?

About the modern game he has a long catalogue of grouses. The habit of embracing whenever a wicket falls nauseates by its fatuity. In the old days bowlers expected wickets and took them with quiet satisfaction. The author deplores the one-day game, hampers, the demise of the leg-spinner, thigh pads, shortened boundaries,

Packaged tourists

A. L. Le Quesne

ROBIN MARLAR

Decision Against England: The Centenary Ashes 1982-3
176pp. Methuen. £7.95.
0 413 52650 X

BOB WILLIS with ALAN LEE

The Captain's Diary: England in Australia and New Zealand 1982-83
187pp. Collins. £8.95.
0 00 218002 2

RAY CAIRNS and GLENN TURNER
Glenn Turner's Century of Centuries
280pp. Hodder and Stoughton.
£9.95.
0 340 32713 3

DAVID LEMMON

Jahany Waa's Hit Today:
A Cricketing Biography of J. W. H. T. Douglas
152pp. Allen and Unwin. £8.95.
0 04 796076 0

RAY EAST with RALPH DELLOR
A Funny Turn: Confessions of a Cricketing Clown
125pp. Allen and Unwin. £5.95.
0 04 796075 2

FERGUS MCKENDRICK

Pulpit Cricket and other stories
144pp. Collins. £7.95.
0 00 218026 X

Cricket books continue to appear in shoals: surely about four of them for every one on any other sport, even soccer? There is nothing new about this, admittedly: cricket is far and away the most highbrow of all major games, and alone of them all has long possessed an aesthetics and a literature of its own — a literature that can on occasions become painfully self-conscious. But it is only in the last twenty years that what one might call "pop cricket literature" has really taken off. Who buys the books in these days of depression cannot conceive; but so many publishers with an eye on their profit-margins have jumped on this bandwagon that a safe market must exist. With one exception, belong firmly to the ephemeral end of the spectrum; but they fall into three fairly well-marked sub-categories.

Accounts of Individual Test series, especially Anglo-Australian Test series, are one of the oldest forms of cricket literature, reaching back to the beginning of the century, and so far as a publisher. There are two here which deal with the English 1982-83

tour of Australia: one of them, Robin Marlar's *Decision Against England*, by a distinguished ex-player turned journalist, the other, *The Captain's Diary*, by Bob Willis. It is their misfortune that the 1982-83 tour was, away from an English point of view, a remarkably downbeat and disappointing series. It was moreover the first series in which the full effects of the Australian cricketing authorities' surrender to the Packer television interests, Television ballyhoo surrounded it: instant replays of controversial umpiring decisions, deliberately inflammatory pre-Test commercials, and the equally deliberate playing up of the triangular one-day "World Series Cup" at the expense of the five Test Matches proper which preceded it. It is a merit of Marlar's book that he recognizes the importance of these issues by including chapters on packaged cricket, codes of behaviour, electronic aids and the great umpiring controversy, as well as reprinting in appendices both the text of the TV commercial which aroused so much criticism and the five-page "Code of Behaviour" to which, God save us, all Australian Test players are now required to subscribe by the Australian Cricket Board. These inclusions imply a welcome broadening of perspective from the customary incident-by-incident run-through of the five Tests which Marlar supplies neither better nor worse than most of his predecessors, his technical expertise providing compensation for a lack of distinction in the writing. Willis's book is quite different. A diary in form, it is confessedly ghosted, and how far it represents the England captain's authentic day-to-day thoughts it is not easy to say. Certainly, though, the ghosting has not strained the personality out, and one of the most interesting and appealing things about this book is the vividness with which it expresses the attractive qualities of Willis the man and both his merits and defects as a captain. It is notably short on detailed technical analysis, but strong on determination, integrity and honest self-criticism. Few will think the book without a feeling of strong sympathy for the looking touring captain whose own total commitment to depression cannot conceive; but so many publishers with an eye on their profit-margins have jumped on this bandwagon that a safe market must exist. With one exception, belong firmly to the ephemeral end of the spectrum; but they fall into three fairly well-marked sub-categories.

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Cricketing autobiographies began to appear in significant numbers between the wars, but the cricketing biography

— and especially what may be called its historical sub-species, the biography of a famous cricketer of the past — is a much more recent phenomenon. *Glenn Turner's Century of Centuries* concerns a current, or only just retired, player; its title describes exactly what it is, a catalogue of Turner's 103 first-class centuries, with comments by the author and by Turner himself on each. Much more interesting is *Johnny Waa's Hit Today*, David Lemmon's biography of J. W. H. T. Douglas, who captained both England's triumphant last tour of Australia before the First World War and their disastrous first one after it. Like Willis, Douglas's merits as a captain lay more in his moral qualities than in his intellectual ones. A man of forceful and direct personality, he was a magnificent all-round sportsman in the pre-1914 amateur mould, winning an Olympic gold medal at boxing and an England amateur soccer cap, as well as playing in twenty-three Test Matches, captaining England in eighteen of them and captaining and dominating the Essex side for eighteen years. Mr Lemmon's book efficiently records Douglas's cricketing career, conveys a clear impression of his personality and includes some interesting reflections on the contrasts between pre- and post-war first-class cricket. But it is very much, as it is described on the cover, "a cricketing biography which considerably and regrettably attenuates its interest and value. Both the private life and the historical setting are almost completely unilluminated — it is symptomatic that nothing is said about Douglas's marriage except that he and his wife "tended to lead their separate lives", and that the chapter on the war years throws no light on how much, if any, active service Douglas saw and is concerned mainly with the cricket he played during them. Nor is there any discussion of the structure of first-class cricket and the nature of amateurism during the period, though these factors were crucial in shaping Douglas's life.

Ray East's *A Funny Turn* is an aggressive but very lightweight set of reflections by one of the recognized funny men of the modern game. Fergus McKendrick's *Pulpit Cricket* is frankly an oddity — a rambling series of anecdotal, humorous and half-serious, loosely strung together round the memories of an academic but inexperienced enthusiast. The book's raison d'être is not easy to discern, but it does achieve a well-managed pathos at the end.

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Two paperback books on cricket have recently been published: *Phoenix from the Ashes: The Story of the England-Australia Series 1981* (80pp. Unwin. £1.95. 0 04 796128 3) by Mike Brasher, first with a foreword by Ian Botham, first published in 1982 by Hodder and Stoughton. Also first published then and now re-issued in paperback is *This is the Game of Cricket* (127pp. Unwin. £1.75. 0 04 796075 6) by George Mel, illustrated by Bill Tidy.

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